



JEREMIAH 4

unto thee; for thou art the Lord
our God. Truly in vain is salvation
hoped for from the hills, and
from the multitude of Israel;
for God is the salvation of Israel,
and he is the Lord of hosts.
24 For shame hath devoured
our youth, their sons and their
daughters;
25 We lie down in our shame,
and our confusion covereth us;
for we have sinned against the
Lord, our God, we and our
youth, and we have not
heard his voice.

Encountering God

THROUGH LECTIO DIVINA

A Guided Meditation of John 4:4-26
An Arise Ministries Collective Resource

A NOTE FROM MARNEE

I am so glad to be joining in this practice with you. Lectio Divina is one of my favorite ways to interact with Scripture - Perhaps because it doesn't feel like I have to have *all the right answers* and can simply come to God as I am - Frazzled, a mess, and often having more questions than comfort. The Lectio Divina practice helps us let down our guard and simply *be* with Him - Learning the art of being still and resting in His Word.

As we begin our journey through John 4:4-26, I can't help but think of this passage from Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his book *Life Together*:

"The Word of Scripture should never stop sounding in your ears and working in you all day long, just like the words of someone you love. And just as you do not analyze the words of someone you love, but accept them as they are said to you, accept the Word of Scripture and ponder it in your heart, as Mary did. That is all...Do not ask "how shall I pass this on?" but "What does it say to me? Then ponder this word long in your heart until it has gone right into you and take possession of you."

Let's embark together on encountering God through this ancient practice.

With love,

Marnee



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About Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina is Latin for "divine reading" and has been an active way of responding to Scripture for over 1500 years. Because many in the early church didn't have access to the Bible and/or were illiterate, this practice became a way to experience, listen, know, and interact with God. It was a way to encourage the greater body to have a personal experience with the Most High. For the next four weeks we will practice the experience of responding to God and His Word together in a way that might be very different than what you're used to.

There are four primary practices within Lectio Divina as outlined below. We will cover them in more depth as we enter into four weeks of contemplation together.

Lectio (reading): Slowly read through the Scripture, listening for a word or phrase that connects with you. Whatever jumps out at you, for any reason, just notice it.

Meditatio (meditation): Reread the passage and spend intentional focus on the word(s) or phrase(s) that stuck out to you. Spend the necessary time reflecting on the word or phrase, allowing it to sink in more deeply.

Oratio (prayer): Pray what you most desire to say to God. Ask Him how this word speaks into your life, then give space to listen for his response. Have a journal and pen close by to write down any thoughts that come, and make note of what you believe God might be speaking to you.

Contemplatio (contemplation): Rest in God, be still with Him, and feel Him with you.

Week One - Scripture Discovery

We'll use portions of the Inductive Bible Study Method to gain insight into our passage this week. Let's pray for the Holy Spirit to be upon us as we move into this place.

First, take a moment to notice your body. Is there a place(s) where you are keeping tension? Do you need to relax your shoulders, take a breath, or adjust how you are sitting before we enter into this space?

Gracious Father, we come to you in this moment, asking for a peace to blanket our hearts. Let the world and all its chaos fall away from us and bring us into a sacred space with you. Open our hearts, minds, and bodies to an experience with your Word. Amen

Before we begin and as a practice to quiet ourselves before the Lord, let's take a moment to reflect on the day/week.

- » What moment today or this past week are you most grateful for?
- » What moment today or this past week are you least grateful for?

Take some time conversing with the Lord over these questions and when you are ready, begin reading the passage (located in the back of this packet).

GAINING INSIGHT - INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

OBSERVE:

- » Read the passage out loud, then a second time to yourself. Notice any words or phrases that jump out at you.
- » Ask questions to observe the facts of the passage.
 - » Who are the main characters in this text?
 - » What is happening in the passage?
 - » What is being taught?
 - » When and where did this take place?
- » Mark key words in the passage and pay special attention to repeated phrases

INTERPRET:

- » What is the author's intent in writing/including this particular passage of Scripture?
- » What would the original hearers or audience have thought?
- » How does this passage fit within the greater story of the Bible? Within the gospel?

APPLY:

- » What does this passage tell me about God?
- » What is God leading me to do differently in response to what I observed and interpreted?
- » Is there a belief I need to re-examine?

Week Two - Lectio Divina

Before we begin, take a moment to notice your body. Is there any place you are keeping tension? Do you need to relax your shoulders, take a breath, or adjust how you are sitting before we enter into this space?

Precious Father, as we enter prayer now, we pause to be still; to breathe slowly; to re-center our scattered senses upon the presence of you oh Lord. Holy Spirit, fill our hearts and open our minds to your leading. Amen

As we prepare our hearts for time with God let's take a moment to reflect on the day/week.

- » When did you give and receive the most love today or in this past week?
- » When did you give and receive the least love today or in this past week?

Take a few moments and spend some time conversing with the Lord over these questions and when you are ready begin reading the passage.

THE ENCOUNTER

LECTIO (reading):

- » Read the passage 3-4 times during this process. Read it slowly and attentively. During the first two readings, be aware and listen for the word or phrase that catches your attention and lights up for you.

MEDITATIO (meditation):

- » Take time to sit with your word or phrase. Re-read the passage quietly to yourself and listen to where the word connects with your life right now. Enter into the scene in your imagination. Carefully watch the people. Listen to how they interact. What do you hear and experience as you watch and listen?

ORATIO (prayer):

- » Talk to God about the word or phrase he has highlighted and what's coming up. How has God addressed you in this Word and invited you to respond? Allow the Scripture to lead you into a prayer response.

CONTEMPLATIO (contemplation):

- » Rest in God's presence. Deeply receive God's word and rest in his presence and love. Clear your mind of any thoughts. Enjoy simply being with God. Give yourself some time to wait and be still before you reenter life as usual.

Week Three - Connecting with Scripture

As in previous weeks, begin by taking a moment to notice your body. Is there a place where you are keeping tension? Do you need to relax your shoulders, take a breath, or adjust how you are sitting before we enter into this space?

Merciful Father, when you speak you impart life. Your words are living and active. Open our minds and hearts to you today as we dive deeper into this passage. Let any unrest be quieted and our hearts turned toward you. Amen

As we prepare our hearts for a time with God let's take a moment to reflect on the day/week.

- » Today or in the past week, when did you feel most alive?
- » Today or in the past week, when did you most feel life draining out of you?

Take a few moments and spend some time conversing with the Lord over these questions and when you are ready begin reading the passage.



HEART TO HEART

- » As you picture the passage, what moment, action or phrase stands out to you?

- » As you watch the action unfold, what do you see? What does this cause you to think and feel?

- » Why might God have caused that moment, word or phrase to stand out to you?

- » How does this passage connect with your life?

- » Is there some idea, feeling or intention you need to embrace from it? If so, what is it?

- » What might God be inviting you to be, know, understand, or feel?

- » Be open to the quiet and don't feel pressured to come up with an answer.

Week Four - Visio Divina

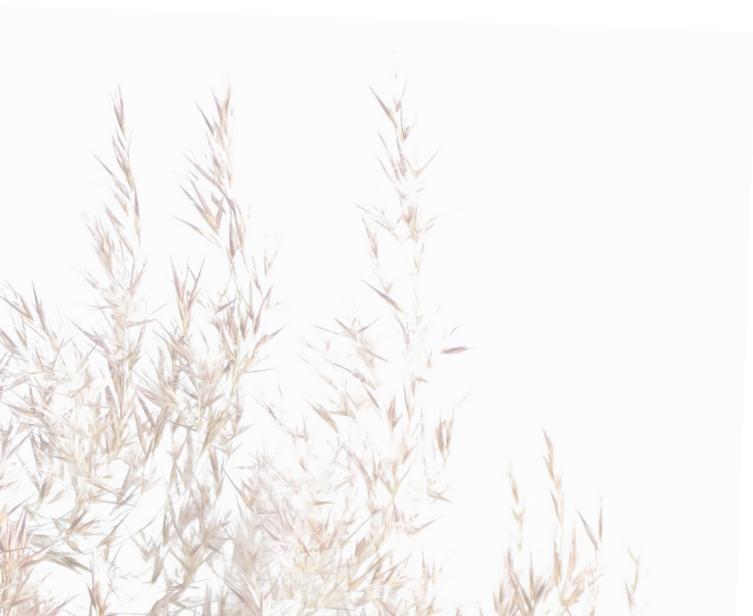
Visio divina is a form of divine seeing in which we prayerfully invite God to speak to our hearts as we look at an image. First, simply spend time gazing at the picture below. Let your eyes focus on the details. After you've had time to simply take in the painting, let the attached questions guide you in a time of silent reflection. At the end of the visio divina, you will be invited to share a word or phrase to express your experience of the image.

For our final week together, take a moment to notice your body. How are you holding it compared to the last three weeks? Does it feel different to you? Are there places you are keeping tension? What needs to be relaxed? How has your breathing changed?

Loving Father, as we close our eyes for a moment, let us pause and center our breath. Clear our minds, Lord, and enter into this space, Holy Spirit. Then as we open our eyes to this image, let your colors, shapes, and imagery speak to our hearts. Amen

As we prepare our hearts to enter into a moment with the Lord, let's take some time to reflect on the day/week.

When were you the happiest today or this past week? When were you the saddest today or this past week? Take a few moments and spend some time conversing with the Lord over these questions. Give yourself time to embrace whatever emotions arise of comfort or discomfort and when you are ready begin noticing the image.





As you gaze at the image, notice your breath and your body.

Simply be present to the image and allow it to speak to your heart, without any particular agenda. It might speak to you in words or wordlessly.

- » How do you feel looking at the image? What do you notice in your body?
- » If you had to describe the image in a sentence or two silently to yourself, what would you say?
- » If you were in the image, where would you place yourself?
- » Do you get a glimpse of the sacred from this image? Is God speaking to you in this image?
- » Does a name for God arise for you from this image? In silence, sit with what you have received.
- » If you choose, share aloud a word or phrase to express your experience of the image.

**Instructions for this week are adapted from the book Centering Prayer for Everyone by Lindsay Boyer.*

**The image is called Christ and the Samaritan Woman at the Well (1795) by Angelika Kauffmann*

Conclusion

Dear ones, my hope as we close these past four weeks is that you have given space to experience and practice contemplative prayer. Through this experience my desire for you has been that you have learned more about yourself, to know what gives you life and what takes it away. To stretch yourself just a smidge more into those uncomfortable spaces and rest there - Realizing you do not have to come up with any profound answers when you sit before the Lord but rather, just soak in His love for you.

Lastly, this is a difficult season. If during this process you have unearthed something that feels too big to hold on your own, I want to encourage you to reach out to a friend, mentor, or even a therapist to join you in the journey of holding.



Visit arise ministries collective.org for additional resources and encouragement. Be sure to subscribe so we can send you updates about new articles, podcast, events, printables, and studies.

JOHN 4:4-26 (ESV)

4 And he had to pass through Samaria.

5 So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.

6 Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."

8 (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.)

9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

11 The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?"

12 Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock."

13 Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,

14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."

16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."

17 The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband';

18 for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."

19 The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet.

20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship."

21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

25 The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things."